

TIER 3 RAIL — LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION'S COMMENTS

507. MR N.W. MORTON to the Minister for Transport:

Can the minister please clarify the Leader of the Opposition's comments around tier 3 rail?

Point of Order

Mr W.J. JOHNSTON: As I understand the standing orders, the minister can be asked about the operations of his agency. I do not see how he can be asked about the opinion of another member of Parliament. I think the member has badly phrased the question, and therefore it is not in accordance with standing orders.

The SPEAKER: As we all know, tier 3 rail is part of transport.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr D.C. NALDER replied:

I think it is vitally important that I take this opportunity to clarify a few untruths that have been spoken in this house and out in the broader community by the Leader of the Opposition. I can understand the concern of the member because the Leader of the Opposition said in this house yesterday that the closure of tier 3 railway lines would see tens of thousands of trucks in the metropolitan area.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central, I call you to order for the first time. Member for Cannington, I do not want to hear from you.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The Leader of the Opposition said that we would see tens of thousands of trucks in the metropolitan area. I can categorically say that all he needed to do was have a conversation with Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd to understand what it would do should the tier 3 railway lines close. They are expected to close on 30 June. CBH is organising bin-to-bin transfers. It will shift that grain by truck through to Brookton or Kellerberrin, with the odd load to Merredin. The closure of tier 3 railway lines will see zero extra truck movements in the metropolitan area.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I call you to order now for the third time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: It is very clear that the Leader of the Opposition has little knowledge of what happens in one of our critical industries in the regional parts of Western Australia. I have a map that I would like to table for members of Parliament that shows tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 railway lines. The tier 3 railway lines are the dotted blue ones. They are to the east of tier 1 railway lines. Those tier 1 railway lines run to Kwinana, Geraldton and Albany; they do not run to Bunbury. Guess what? The Leader of the Opposition was on 6PR back in April. We are pointing out that with the expansion of grain trucks going to Collie and the south west, exporting out through Bunbury, and with the closure of tier 3 rail lines, which is a broken promise of the government, there is a huge increase in grain trucks running around those roads but there is no commensurate improvement in the roads, particularly to the east of Collie. If those tier 3 railway lines remained open, guess how many fewer trucks there would be on those roads to Bunbury? There will be zero. It would be the same number, because if we look at this map, we see that there is no railway line into Bunbury.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Churchlands, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The other thing I want to point out is that these bins where the tier 3 railway line is are holding grain for CBH. How much grain does CBH export out of Bunbury? It exports zero. Again, there is this whole argument. I was listening to John Cecil on ABC regional radio when I heard the Leader of the Opposition say exactly the same thing. He was asked whether Labor supports exporting grain out of Bunbury. The Leader of the Opposition said on radio said that yes, it does.

Mr M.P. Murray interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Collie–Preston!

Mr D.C. NALDER: The only way grain will get out of the Bunbury port is by truck. Guess what? There is a little history behind the closure of tier 3 railway lines that members may want to know. When tier 3 railway lines were put before an industry committee, CBH was part of that industry committee —

Mr M. McGowan interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the Opposition, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr D.C. NALDER: CBH was part of the committee that looked at whether the tier 3 line should be closed. In 2009 every member of that committee voted that it should. What did this government do? It put \$120 million into road improvements to ensure that the trucks could carry that grain safely out of the CBH sites. I do not understand where the Leader of the Opposition is coming from when he claims that what this government is doing is bad for regional Western Australia. We are working extremely hard to deliver great outcomes for farmers and to deliver great outcomes for regional Western Australia. It is clear that the Leader of the Opposition has no idea what occurs in regional Western Australia. I table the map.

[See paper 1782.]